

Appln. No. 09/941,232
Amdt. dated April 18, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 18, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The January 18, 2005 Final Office Action and the Examiner's comments have been carefully considered. In response, telephone interviews were conducted with Examiner Dastouri, claims are amended and remarks are set forth below in a sincere effort to place the present application in form for allowance. The amendments are supported by the application as originally filed. Therefore, no new matter is added.

Inasmuch as the present amendment raises no new issues for consideration, and, in any event, places the present application in condition for allowance or in better condition for consideration on appeal, its entry under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

INTERVIEWS

The courtesy of Examiner Dastouri in granting and conducting numerous interviews in connection with this application is acknowledged and appreciated.

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This application was previously handled by Examiner Virginia M. Kibler. It is Applicant's understanding as a result of conversations with Patent Office personnel that Examiner Kibler is no longer responsible for this application and that responsibility has been assigned to Examiner Dastouri.

The interviews with Examiner Dastouri took place on April 12, 13 and 14, 2005. Present at the interviews were Examiner Dastouri and Applicant's attorney, Robert Michal. During the interviews the present invention and the teachings of the prior art were discussed. The features of the present invention which are not disclosed, taught or suggested in the cited references were pointed out.

As a result of the interviews, Examiner Dastouri agreed that certain features of the invention are not disclosed, taught or suggested in the cited references, and that if these features were included in the independent claims, the claims would be allowable over the prior art.

PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

In the Office Action claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 21-23 and 25-45 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being

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unpatentable over USP 6,574,423 (Oshima et al.) in view of JP 09-224264 (Furuhata).

In response, as indicated above, interviews were conducted with Examiner Dastouri to reach agreement regarding this application. As a result of the interviews, Applicant's attorney and Examiner Dastouri reached agreement regarding amendments to be made to the claims to more clearly define the present invention over the cited references. The independent claims have been amended in accordance with the agreement reached with Examiner Dastouri. In view of the amendment of the independent claims, claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 21-23 and 25-45, all of the claims currently pending in the present application, are in form for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

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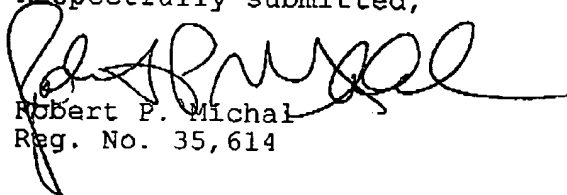
Entry of this Amendment under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.116, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to point out where there is support for a contrary view.

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If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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